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[Chaco Period] Terena

For carrying and storing foodstuffs the Terena used such containers as clay pots, calabashes, baskets, and netted bags. In their houses they also kept such tools and weapons as the digging stick, stone ax, club, spear, and bow and arrows. Materials for weaving baskets and bags were kept in corners, while dried meat, dried fish, skins of animals, and bags of vegetable foods hung from the rafters.

CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS

Both men and women wore a cotton loincloth stretching from the waist to the knees, known as a *shiripá*. A shorter black *shiripá* was worn by men on war parties. During cold weather everyone wore a sleeveless cotton shirt, *repenóti*. In warm weather children went about unclothed. Both men and women used pentagon-shaped leather sandals fastened with a leather thong. All body hair, including eyebrows and pubic hair, was carefully pulled out with pincers. Hair was combed back over the head and fastened with a cord.

The Terena were fond of wearing necklaces, *nakóti;* bracelets, *imotáki;* and anklets, *imóheve.* These decorations were made by stringing dried seeds, animal teeth, and disks of shell and bone on a cotton cord. In later days, glass beads and bracelets and rings made from silver and even gold were used. During ceremonials the Terena used diadems made from red feathers and short skirts made from rhea feathers. Yellow parrot feathers could be used only by chiefs and usually signified that the wearer had killed an enemy. War chiefs wore, in addition, a robe made from jaguar skins.

Discussing the dress and painted designs of the Terena, Castelnau says:

> These Indians have no other clothes than a piece of cloth which they wrap around their kidneys, their hair is suspended at the back of the head and tied up to form a tail. Both sexes have the habit of covering their bodies with singular paintings, resembling those of the Guaycuru. Their designs are often excessively delicate and represent a harmony and delicacy which by no means can be described. [Ibid., vol. 2, p. 471.]

In connection with ornaments and body paintings, Castelnau adds the following:

> Here are glass beads which are fastened onto cotton cloths with wide stripes. There are scarlet feathers which are tied together and cut to make head ornaments; over there is a woman who is covering her husband's body with

[P. 9-A]

While in the Chaco the Terena also claim to have cultivated bananas and sugarcane, perhaps obtaining these plants from the Spaniards. The Terena word for banana is *panana*, which seems to indicate a rather recent date for this plant. The Terena word for sugarcane, *caiána*, also points to the recent adoption of this plant.

Other crops cultivated were pumpkins, *kamo*; beans, *kareoké*; tobacco, *chaki*; and cotton, *nevoi*. Tobacco leaves, when mature, were picked, rolled so as to squeeze out the moisture, and dried. The rolling was repeated several times. Tobacco was smoked in clay pipes. Cotton, of course, was spun into yarn and used for weaving cloth.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS AND BIRDS

The Terena had medium-sized short-haired dogs. Parrots, macaws, and rheas were kept for their feathers. Horses, *kamo*, and cattle, *vaka*, were acquired in raids, the horses being used for warfare and hunting. Cows appear not to have been milked but, no doubt, augmented the meat supply. Cows and oxen were used for riding, the animal being guided by a bridle attached to a ring in the animal's nose. Saddles, *nikokoróti*, for both horses and cattle, were made from dried banana leaves by tying two cylindrical bundles together so that the bundles would rest, one on each side of the animal's backbone, no stirrups being used.

MANUFACTURES

The Terena made baskets, fans, and hats from thin strips of bamboo, "carandá," and from "piri." The thin outer layer of the wild bamboo was cut into narrow strips from which large and small baskets were made by plaiting. Large baskets were carried on the back with the aid of a tumpline. From "piri" and "carandá" fibers, hats and fans were made, the fans being used for killing mosquitoes and for maintaining small cooking fires.

The Terena also used netted bags of various sizes for carrying and storing food and other objects. The string used was made from the fibers of the *yulú* plant (probably a species of *Bromelia*). The leaves of the *yulú* were first soaked in water to soften the cells surrounding the fibers, the soft substance being later scraped away with a wooden knife. The fine fibers were then twisted into string, *ihe*, on the thigh or spun on a wooden spindle.

Palm fibers also were sometimes used. Whether the Terena used the lacing or knotting method for making netted bags in the past is not certain. They now make them from *yulú* fiber string, using the reef knot method of netting. Small bags were called *verí* and large bags, *nimaká*. 284 415

After removing the seeds from cotton and plucking it out, the cotton fibers were spun into yarn or string on a wooden spindle, *hopáe*. The spindle was a thin stick of wood about 12 inches in length with a pottery whorl about 2 inches in diameter fixed near one end. After attaching the string near to the whorl and setting it in motion, the spindle was dropped and allowed to turn in the air. 283

Although the Terena no longer remember the form of the loom used in the Chaco, it is highly probable that it was much the same as the type used today. The loom is made of two upright sticks which hold a crossbar above, while another crossbar is fastened below. The warp is wound around these two bars, but at each turn the warp is looped back over a string running horizontally between the two bars. This makes cutting unnecessary after the cloth is woven. The weft is passed through the warp with a wooden shuttle. Periodically the weaver battens down the weft with a long thin wooden stick. The weaver begins at the bottom and works upward. In the past, the Terena used woven cotton cloth for making loincloths, sleeveless shirts, mantles, and narrow belts. 286 [178] [291]

Out of clay the Terena made cooking pots, water jugs, and flat bowls for serving food. The clay was dried, pulverized, and sifted through a netted cotton cloth. Powdered potsherds and water were then added, the mixture being well kneaded. The potter now made a flat disk to serve as the bottom of the pot. On this disk she built her pot by adding coil after coil, flattening each one between her fingers. After several coils were added she smoothed the inner and outer walls with a small shell, dipping it repeatedly into a pot of water. When the pot was of desired thinness and smoothness it was left to dry, after which it was fired. The pots were then decorated with black color for which the resin of the "jatobá" tree was used. The Terena claim they made some pots in the forms of animals and birds. 323 [386] [532]

Fire, *duíku*, was made by rotating a pointed stick between the palms of the hands, one end of 372

and a platform bed resting on forked sticks. Be- 159
sides himself, his wife, and six children, the house [592]
is shared with his mother, a brother, and a male
cousin. Eleuterio, his wife, and the small children [513]
sleep on the bed, and the rest of the occupants [352]
sleep in hammocks. Eleuterio's wife uses iron
kettles for most of the cooking, but clay pots are [415]
sometimes used also. The occupants of the house
eat out of clay and wooden dishes. The house is
situated on a lot in the village and is surrounded
by a number of mango and orange trees. Eleuterio [731]
has two dogs, a hen with three chicks, and a young
rooster.

Eleuterio came to the Post with his uncle and 159
grandfather when he was 5 years old. His grand- 177
father, who was a medicine man, came from the 795
Chaco. Both his uncle and grandfather were bap-
tized in the Catholic faith, although his grand-
father never became a regular church member.
Eleuterio was also baptized in the Catholic faith. [797]
At the Post he attended the Protestant mission
school until he was 12. During these years he
lived with and worked for the English missionary,
herding his livestock and carrying mail, but was
not converted to Protestantism.

After leaving school he lived with his uncle 159
until he was 16, assisting him in cultivating his
little farm at the Post. He then went to Aqui-
dauana where he worked for 2 years as a mason's
assistant and later helped a Japanese vegetable
farmer. He then went to work on a fazenda, tak-
ing his mother with him.

After working 3 months on the fazenda he re-
turned to the Post to help his grandfather, who
was becoming very old. After his grandfather [591]
died he married and went to live with his father-
in-law, where he remained for 4 years. During
this time he, together with some other Indians,
worked for a while on the telegraph line. In
1932 he and several other Indians went with the
manager of the Post to fight in the revolution,
staying away for 6 months.

When he came back he built his own house in
the village and began working for the manager
of the Post, doing many things, such as building [465]
repairs, blacksmithing, and farming, for which
he receives 14 cruzeiros per day. He does not
cultivate land of his own. He has been the cap-
tain of one of the three football teams and the [526]
manager of the sports club where dances are given.

[Banana Village]

cold spells the people sit around fires in the early morning to keep warm. 357 513

Containers found in the houses are of the following types: 415

(1) Netted bags made from *yuhí* fibers used for carrying and storing sweetpotatoes, maize, and other garden produce. Small bags are called *ceri* and the large ones *nimaké*. These bags can be carried on the back or used as saddlebags. The mesh averages 4 inches and the size of the twine varies with the size of the bag, generally being about the size of heavy cotton fish netting. [286] [482]

(2) Round baskets of various sizes plaited from thin strips of wild bamboo or other wild cane. Some of the larger baskets have handles, so that they can be hung from a peg in the wall to keep dogs and chickens from taking the contents. [285]

(3) Large wide-mouthed clay pots for storing water, ranging from 1 to 4 gallons in content. These pots are made by the coil method and are unglazed and undecorated. It is reported that in the neighboring village of Cachoeirinha some of the Terena glaze and decorate these large pots. [323]

(4) Flat, glazed pottery dishes are also found. These are of a dark-red color, without decoration, and are used for serving food.

(5) Cast-iron pots purchased in Taunay are widely used for cooking food. [252] [439]

(6) Empty kerosene cans are always in demand for storing water and meal. Any empty can is readily accepted by the Terena.

(7) Calabashes of various sizes cut to form cups and ladles are used for many purposes. Chimarron or maté tea is drunk from calabashes. [824] [272]

(8) Flat iron pans about a yard in diameter are supplied by the Post for toasting manioc meal. [262] [439]

(9) Wooden mortars with wooden pestles for grinding dried maize or dried meat stand in every back yard. The mortar is a round block of wood about 3 feet long and 18 inches in diameter, hollowed out in one end to the depth of 8 or 10 inches. The block is set upright, and maize is placed in the hollow and pounded with a heavy wooden pestle about 3 or 4 feet long; a common sight every morning is to see women at the rear of the houses pounding out the corn meal or dried meat required for the day. 415 412 252

(10) In some houses a few porcelain cups, glasses, and table knives and forks are seen. 415

[Banana] Village]

When the water boils, the woman of the house puts a handful of maté leaves into a special maté calabash and pours the boiling water over the leaves. Every one, starting with the father, then sucks maté through a tube, the calabash being passed from hand to hand until all have had enough. The tube may be of cane or if the family has enough money it may even be of metal. A decorated silver tube is a luxury which few Terena can afford. After drinking maté the people eat whatever is left over from the last evening's meal, such as boiled sweetpotatoes, meat mixed with manioc meal, or whatever fruit may be available.

After breakfast the men take their tools and go to work, either to their fields or to their carpentry or building. Unless field work is urgent the women and children remain at home, the women preparing manioc meal, sewing, washing clothes, and preparing the noonday meal. Right after breakfast the women go to the wells in the village to draw water. They fill their water pots and carry them to their houses on their heads. Often many women meet at a well, each taking her turn at drawing water with a metal bucket attached to a rope. In the meantime, the other women are engaged in conversation, usually amid peals of laughter.

When the sun reaches the zenith, the men return to their houses where the women have prepared a meal of beans, manioc, and dried meat. Each one fills his dish from the cooking pots and sits apart to eat, sometimes sitting on a low stool but usually squatting on the ground. Mothers provide the food for the younger children. Maté is drunk after the meal. Eating is a private act, while drinking maté from a common calabash brings everyone together. The Terena consider maté drinking an important social activity. After eating, both men and women lie in hammocks to rest. Around 2 or 3 o'clock they arise to return to work. In order to prevent the siesta from becoming too long the Post manager rings a bell sometime between 2 and 3 o'clock.

Near sunset the men return home, rest awhile, drink maté, wash themselves, and put on clean clothing. The wives then call the men for the evening meal, which usually consists of beans, rice, manioc, and perhaps some kind of meat. Sometimes the people eat "rapadura" or perhaps sirup with manioc meal before drinking more maté.

[P.27-A]

/405 cont./

592 Since most men have two wives and as a rule have children by
[595] each one, the bedsteads have to be made very large. Most are
[352] so large that six adult persons can sleep on them. If the fertility
in a family hut is so great that the latter becomes too small,
the youngest families build themselves small huts nearby or
353 establish a new family-house. The interior arrangement is the
same in all the huts. The beds are set up in one or two rows.
[415] Near the bed each family has its property in large nets or bags,
either hung on a hut post or on a yntocoqui. In addition, one
sees many earthenware dishes and calabashes here, in all sizes
and shapes, which contain all sorts of things and in part stand on
[411] the floor, in part are hung up. Some weaving frames, bows,
arrows, lances, and guns complete the equipment.

122 Each village has a commander (subchief), and the whole
643 nation is ruled by a cacique, who has a commission as capitão
648 /captain, chief/ from the Brazilian government. This ruler of
643 all the Terenos received me in a very friendly manner, showed
123 me above all /406/ his commission and then a photograph of
Emperor Pedro II, whom he called his amigo. His costume looked
[292] very interesting. He had wound a chiripá around his bare legs,
while the upper part of his body was stuffed into a worn-out
military coat without any buttons. After I had sacrificed a few
bottles of caña /rum/, he presented me with a fan for flies, and
we took most cordial leave from each other.

291 The chief article of clothing of the Terenos is the chiripá,
a rectangular piece of cloth which is wound around the loins.
Both sexes wore this chiripá. Many men were clothed in shirts
or trousers. I often saw young girls with bright-colored cotton
[439] jackets on their bare bodies. They buy or barter for the last-
302 mentioned articles of clothing in Miranda. Young girls and women
paint their faces with black paint, whereas the men decorate
312 their bodies with it only for festivals. Since the Rio de Miranda
439 has salt water, the Indian women provide fresh spring water for
the place. Daily in Miranda, early in the morning, one sees

312 /406 cont./ Daily in Miranda, early in the morning, one sees
439 many women with nets filled with water calabashes, which they
[415] carry on a forehead band.

241 The Terenos plant cotton, maize, and chiefly mandioca.
242 The last-named root is the principal constituent of their diet.
439 A flour (farinha de mandioca) which they make out of the above-
286 named root always finds a good market in Miranda. The Terenos display much taste and patience with regard to weaving. A girl often works six months and more on a hammock. To make up for it, however, these things are also durable and solidly made.
[531] The hammocks are white with a red or blue pattern. They obtain
[586] the blue dye from a plant which they call uito (in any case, indigo). The stems and leaves of the plant named are boiled and then the
[439] yarn is dipped in this brew. The red wool which often appears in their woven work comes from red flannel which they barter for in Miranda. This flannel is cut into pieces, pulled to threads, and then spun again. I saw weaving frames of all sizes with work begun on them in all the huts. They greatly prize their own products, because the latter are very durable, and only very unwillingly yield to bartering them. If they do this, they demand
[415] an audaciously high price for them. The red and white bags with
[531] blue and white bead embroidery are very popular; such bags are
[586] usually the first present from the bride to the bridegroom.

323 The Terenos are likewise very skilled in the making of pottery and display quite a special taste in this. The manufacture is very simple and without any tools. The potter kneels on the stamped, hard, smooth ground; at his side lies a pile of sticky clay, from which he rolls a piece into a ball; he then rolls this into a long roll and forms a ring out of it. He now lays several such rings over one another /407/ and presses and smooths with his hands the vessel thus produced, until it has the proper form. When the vessel is finished to this extent, the pattern is impressed with a string into the still soft mass of clay; it is dried in the sun for a few days, and then it is fired in a very simple manner. That is, the utensils are covered with dry wood and then the latter is set afire. After a few hours the crockery is taken out and the impressed

/407 cont./

323 pattern is painted with palosanto resin on the still red-hot vessel. Later, when the crockery has cooled, the design is completed
● 415 with red and white paint. In all the huts one finds clay utensils in every possible shape and size and suitable for every possible purpose. I saw bowls of over a meter in diameter, which are used for the preparation of mandioca flour. I would gladly have taken a few of them with me, but it was impossible for me to
323 transport them. Both sexes, moreover, make pottery, but the
462 impressing of the patterns, as well as painting them, falls to the women.

285 The men take care of plaiting baskets and hats. The baskets
294 are usually made of split bamboo, whereas the material for hats
[462] is obtained from the dried leaves of a fan palm--called
[829] carnauba. The hats find a good market in Miranda and, despite
[937] the cheap price, leave nothing to be desired with regard to durability.

585 A wedding is celebrated in two ways. The older ceremony
[178] is gradually dying out, since the culture is progressing mightily
[411] and the rifle will soon have driven out the bow and arrow. The ceremony is the following: toward noon six girls, all adorned with feathers and painting, go to the bridegroom's hut. The latter hands over bow and arrows to them, whereupon the girls, singing and dancing, bring these weapons to the bride and then go home. After sundown six young men, adorned in the same manner, fetch the bridegroom and, dancing and singing, lead him to the bride's hut. As soon as he enters the hut, he extends his right hand to the bride and the marriage is concluded. --
585 More common, however, is a second type of marriage ceremony,
273 for at it there is caña to drink. All the members of the family gather in the hut of the bride, and likewise in the bridegroom's house. Thereupon the bridegroom with his whole family goes to the hut of the bride. In front a large basket-bottle of caña is borne; behind it follow the musicians who play the yntaca and ujoe, and finally the bridegroom with the rest of the family. The bride sits on a hammock and also has a large bottle of caña

/90 cont./

361 Boquehina Aldea. It has 18 ranchos, some from 6 to 8
342 meters long by 3 or 4 wide; it is inhabited by 298 Indians.
162
621 Marro Aldea. It has 24 ranchos, some from 9 to 10 meters long by 4 to 5 meters wide and other smaller ones; 386 Indians live in it.

Marrinho Aldea. It has 15 ranchos, the largest from 8 to 10 meters long by 2 to 4 meters wide; 257 Indians live there.

Ipéqué Aldea. It has 11 ranchos, some from 5 to 7 meters long /91/ by 2 to 4 meters wide, and others smaller. In it live 246 Indians.

Santa-Ana Aldea. It has 23 ranchos, some from 6 to 10 meters long by 3 to 4 meters wide, with 379 Indians.

Caytapé Aldea. It has 19 ranchos from 8 to 10 meters long by 3 to 5 meters wide, and 315 Indians.

142 Somatic data. The Terena have dark copper-colored skin, ugly flat face, low forehead, black hair, straight and thick, scanty beard, black eyes, a small nose, small mouth, strong, very white teeth, small ears, small hands and feet.

352 The rancho. The interior of the rancho of these Indians
[237] shows rustic bamboo beds covered with the skin of a cow or
of some other wild animal. The hide serves as a mattress,
[445] the pillows are small bags stuffed with straw, there are in addition in the hut several hammocks, several clay pots for water, and some rustic benches, they have no table, their table is the ground.

The kitchen. This is a very simple rancho, or better said
353 a straw roof, some two meters square and a meter and a half
343 high, under which they keep dishes, pots, and other kitchen utensils.

771 Worship. The Terena believe that there is a God in the
825 sky and they believe in the virtues of the tail of the rattlesnake,
787 which has the gift of being able to communicate with the souls
796 in the other world. The only religious fiesta that they celebrate
[821] is the one which corresponds to our Holy Week; it is the passage of the seven stars; this fiesta lasts seven days.